

THE PRESIDENT'S INTELLIGENCE CHECKLIST

**ISSUED BY THE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

23 NOVEMBER 1963
~~**TOP SECRET**~~

1. South Vietnam

a. Vietnamese Communist efforts to discredit the new Saigon regime stayed in high gear this week.

b. The number of armed attacks was off from the high of the previous week but still some 50% above the year's weekly average.

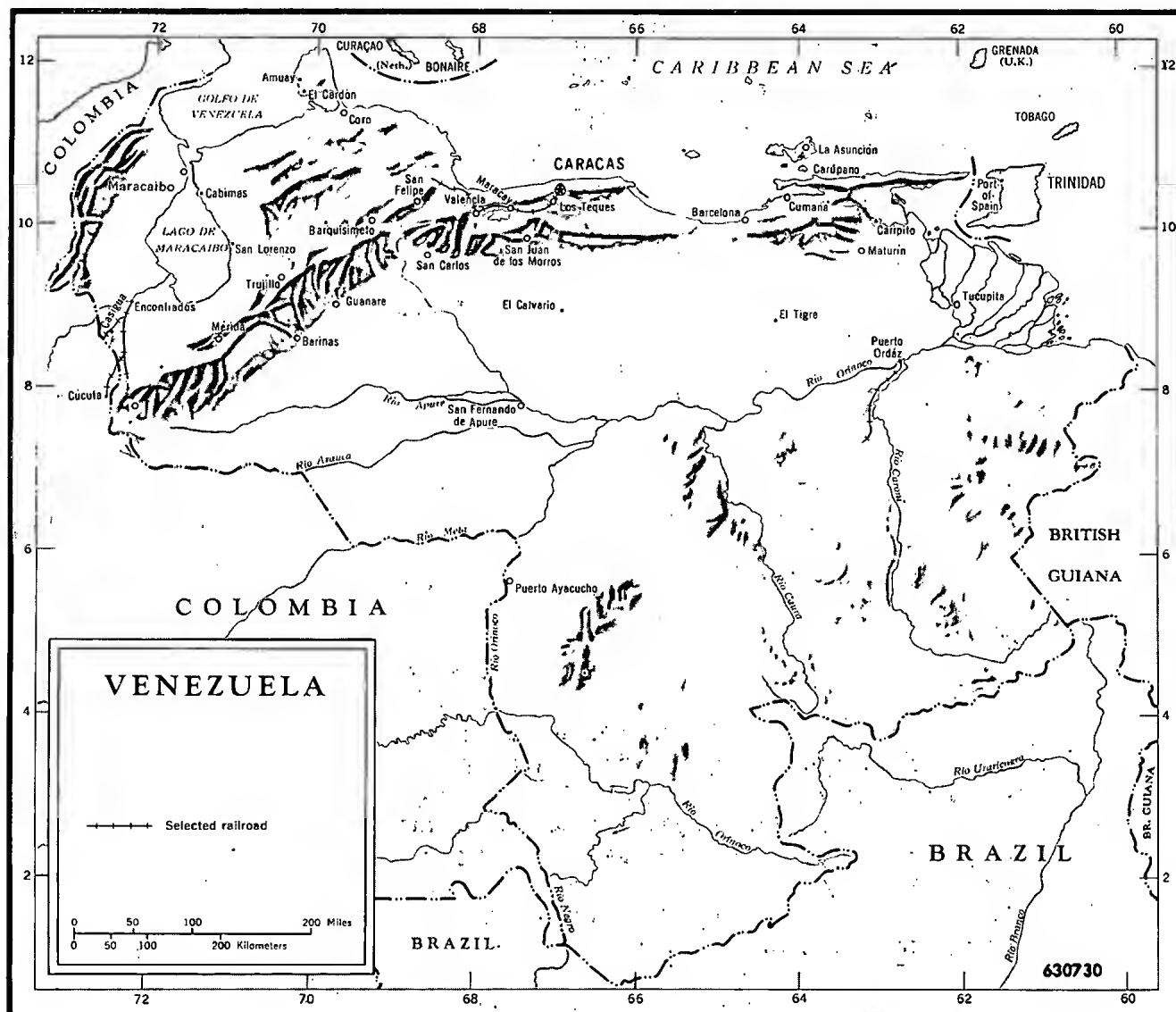
c. These attacks have been, for the most part, small-scale efforts directed against the government's paramilitary forces in the villages. They have been designed more for their psychological impact than for immediate military gain.

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e. The new government is responding by stepping up its own military operations. It is also setting about the hard job of revamping the Diem government apparatus and harnessing broader popular support for the war effort.

f. The generals have been dealing fairly effectively with

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their new responsibilities. There are, however, a few signs of dissension within this group and between it and civilian politicians.

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h. The new regime has also embarked on a purge of high military officers who sided with Diem during the Buddhist crisis and failed to get on the right side soon enough.

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2. Venezuela

a. The death toll from the terrorist outburst in Caracas last Tuesday and Wednesday now stands at about 30.

b. This is the high water mark thus far in the campaign of the Castro-supported Communist extremists to disrupt the national elections a week from tomorrow.

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For The President Only - Top Secret

c. The Betancourt government has struck back hard. Its new unified command over the security forces, [redacted] passed this initial test with flying colors.

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d. At least 500 extremists were arrested and the round-up is still going on. Their removal will hamper the Communist drive against elections in major cities like Caracas.

e. We now expect the elections to be held on schedule, a considerable achievement under the circumstances. The elections will be followed, however, by a Communist effort to prevent the March inauguration of the victor.

f. The rub here is that none of the presidential candidates commands President Betancourt's considerable assets for dealing successfully with the harsh realities of Venezuelan politics. The constitution prevents Betancourt from succeeding himself.

g. In the background, as always, looms the military, which could intervene if the president-elect shows signs of being soft on communism.

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3. USSR-Cuba

[redacted]
[redacted] Cuban interpreters are now posted at several surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites on the island.

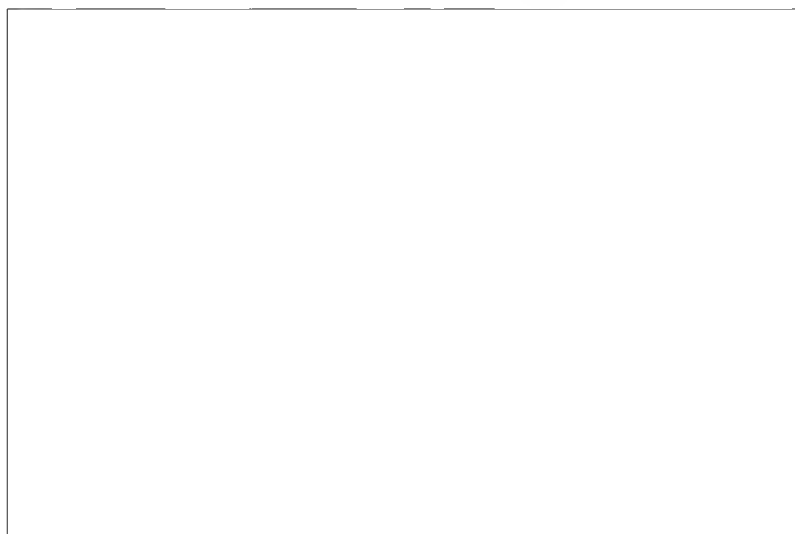
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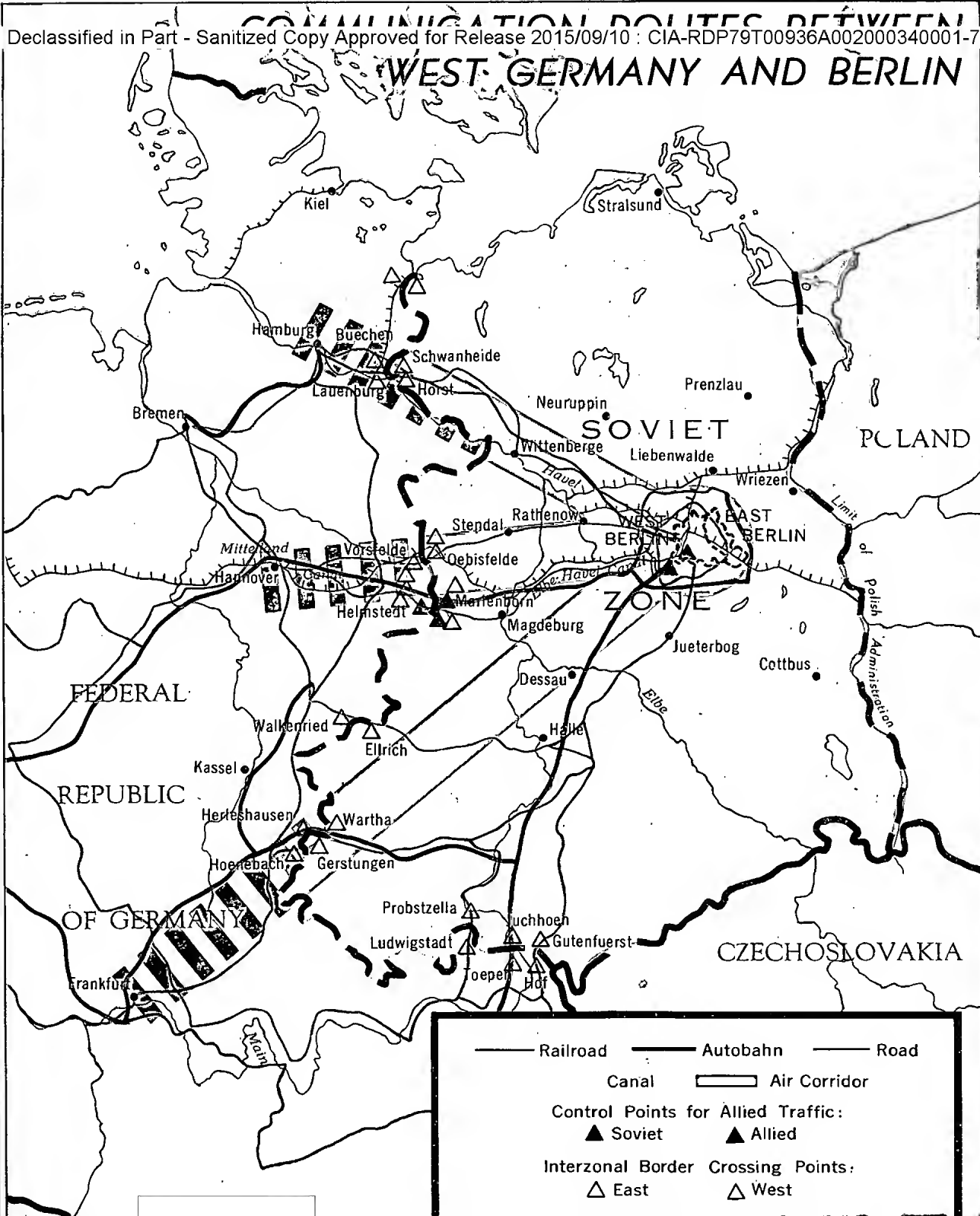
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b. We think this means that on-site training of Cubans has begun on schedule. Field training is to last six months, after which the SAM system may be turned over to Castro.


c. In the past month some 1,500 Soviets arrived in Cuba. Most of these were probably SAM experts, sent to monitor the training.



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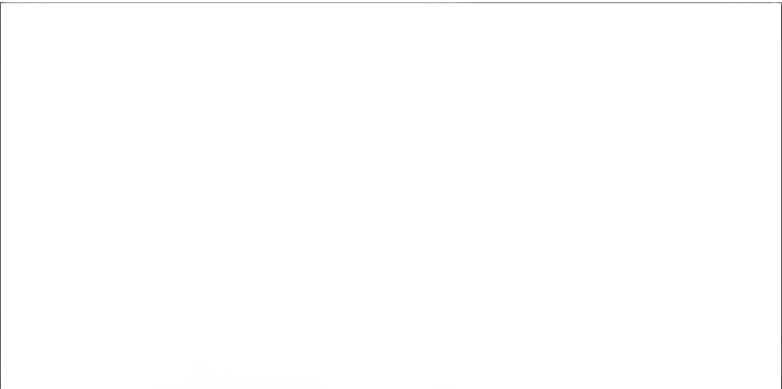
f. All Soviet weapons introduced into Cuba last year have been withdrawn or turned over to the Cubans. The only significant exception is the SAM system.



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4. Berlin

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c. Moscow has tried on a number of past occasions to assert its right to restrict Allied use of the air corridors. In early 1962, the Soviets attempted to reserve "blocks" of air space for their own use. They have since demanded that Western flights stay between stipulated altitudes, that we file flight plans in advance and provide prior notice of border-crossing times.

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d. This sort of harassment stopped in the spring of 1962 when Soviet leaders became convinced that the US was interested in a serious discussion of a Berlin settlement. Moscow may hope that the threat of more of this sort of harassment will jog the US into talks on Berlin.

5. Iraq-Syria-
UAR

a. It now appears that President Arif's role in last Monday's coup in Baghdad may have been virtually that of a bystander.

c. Whatever Arif's role may have been, the coup was primarily an effort by the Iraqi Army to curtail the activities of the extreme wing of the Baath Party. The Baath is an Arab nationalist political organization, active throughout the Arab world, which has been ruling Iraq and Syria.

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d. The coup group has not thrown all Baathists out of the government; there are party members in the new cabinet.

e. Syrian Baathists have welcomed this retention of their Iraqi brothers. Their attitude springs from the recognition that the Baath in Syria cannot stay afloat without support from Iraq.

[REDACTED]

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f. The reaction of Nasir's Egypt, which passionately desires to see the Baath go under, has been exactly the opposite. Cairo has been backing off its all-out support for the coup ever since the new cabinet was announced.

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NOTES

A. USSR

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[REDACTED]

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- B. Congo-USSR Soviet embassy personnel have not yet left Leopoldville, but their departure is expected momentarily. They were ordered out of the country after the Congolese turned up good documentary evidence of their complicity in anti-government plots.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] a letter from an anti-Adoula leader now in Brazzaville asking for funds [REDACTED]

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- C. Britain The Labor Party scored again in the Dundee West by-election Thursday, increasing its 1959 majority of 719 to a thumping 4,955. Heartened by this, Labor is now pushing for general elections at once. Prime Minister Home is not likely to accede.

D. Ecuador

[REDACTED]

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E. Thailand

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F. USSR Cosmos 22, launched a week ago, was recovered yesterday. It is the eleventh unmanned satellite to be recovered. All recoverable satellites have been launched from Tyuratam, the main Soviet missile test center, and recovered after three to ten days aloft.

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